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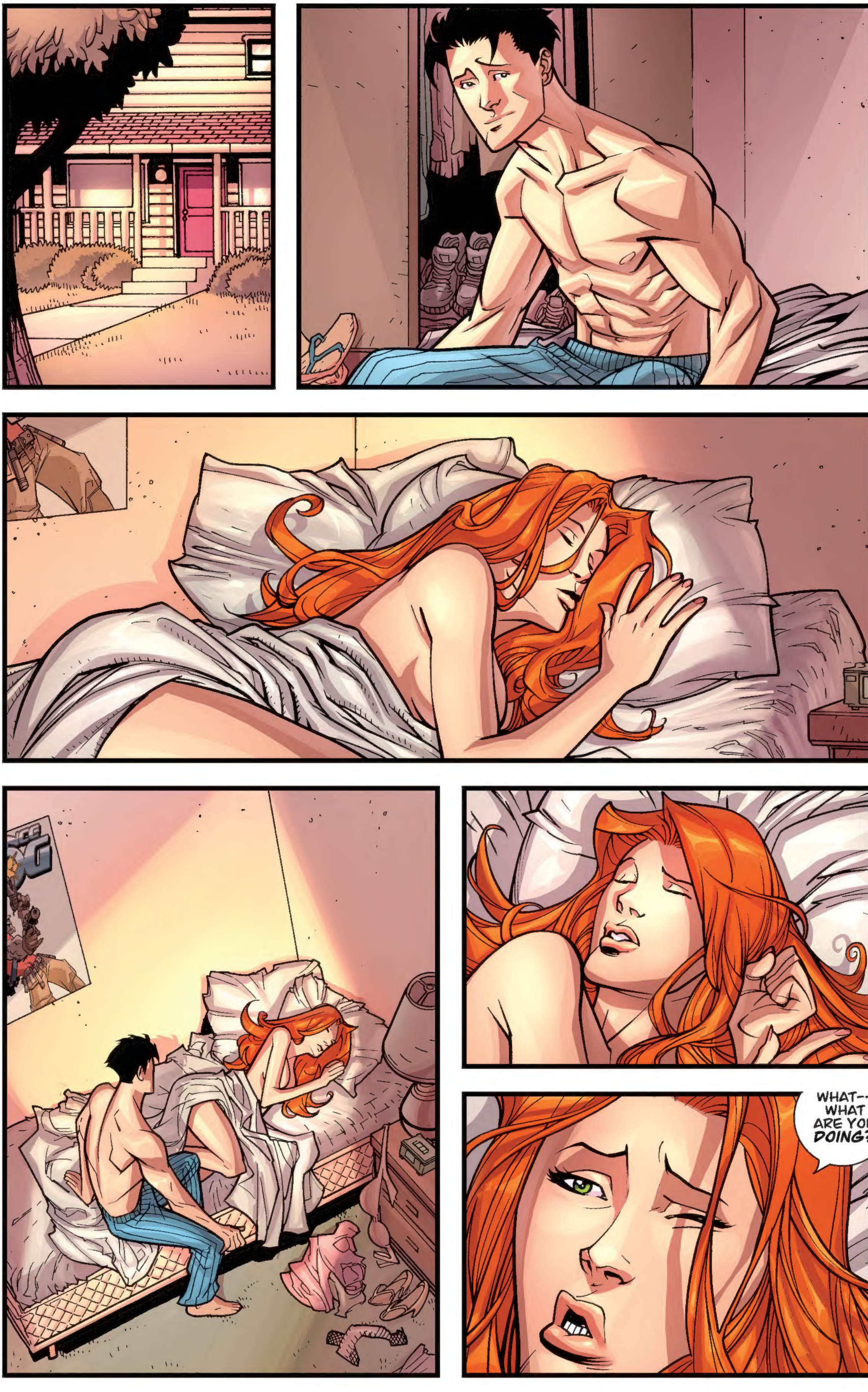
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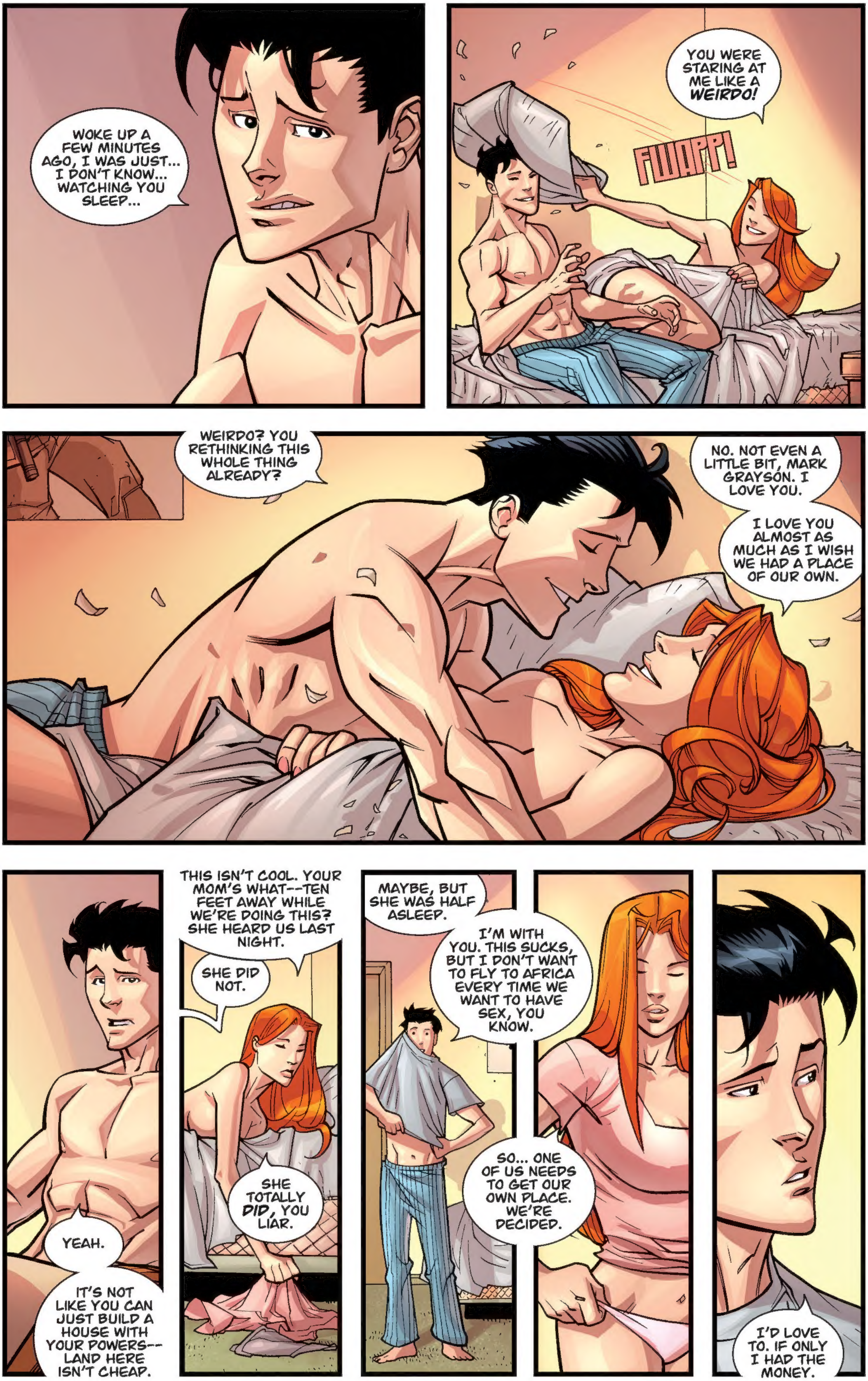
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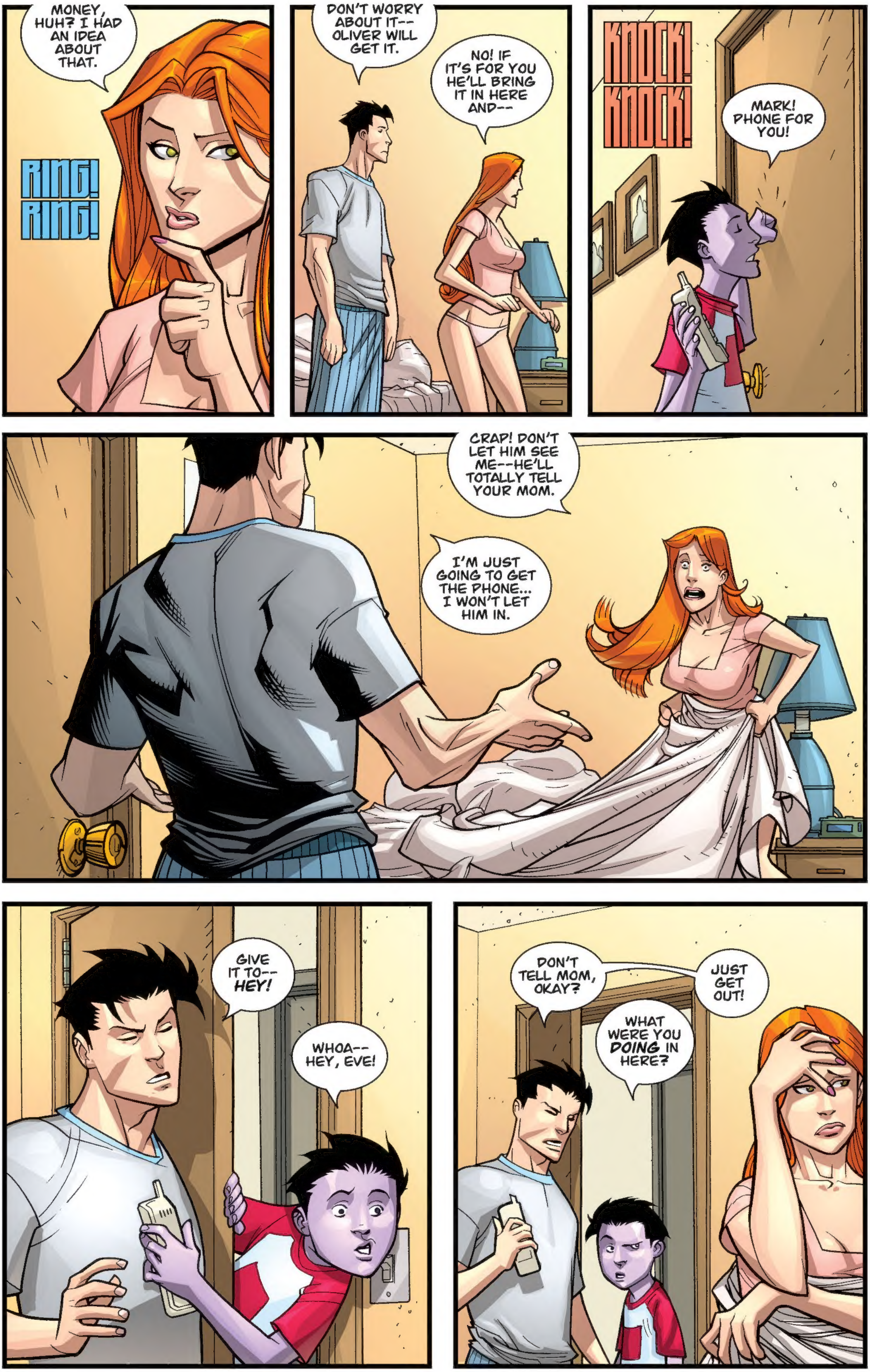
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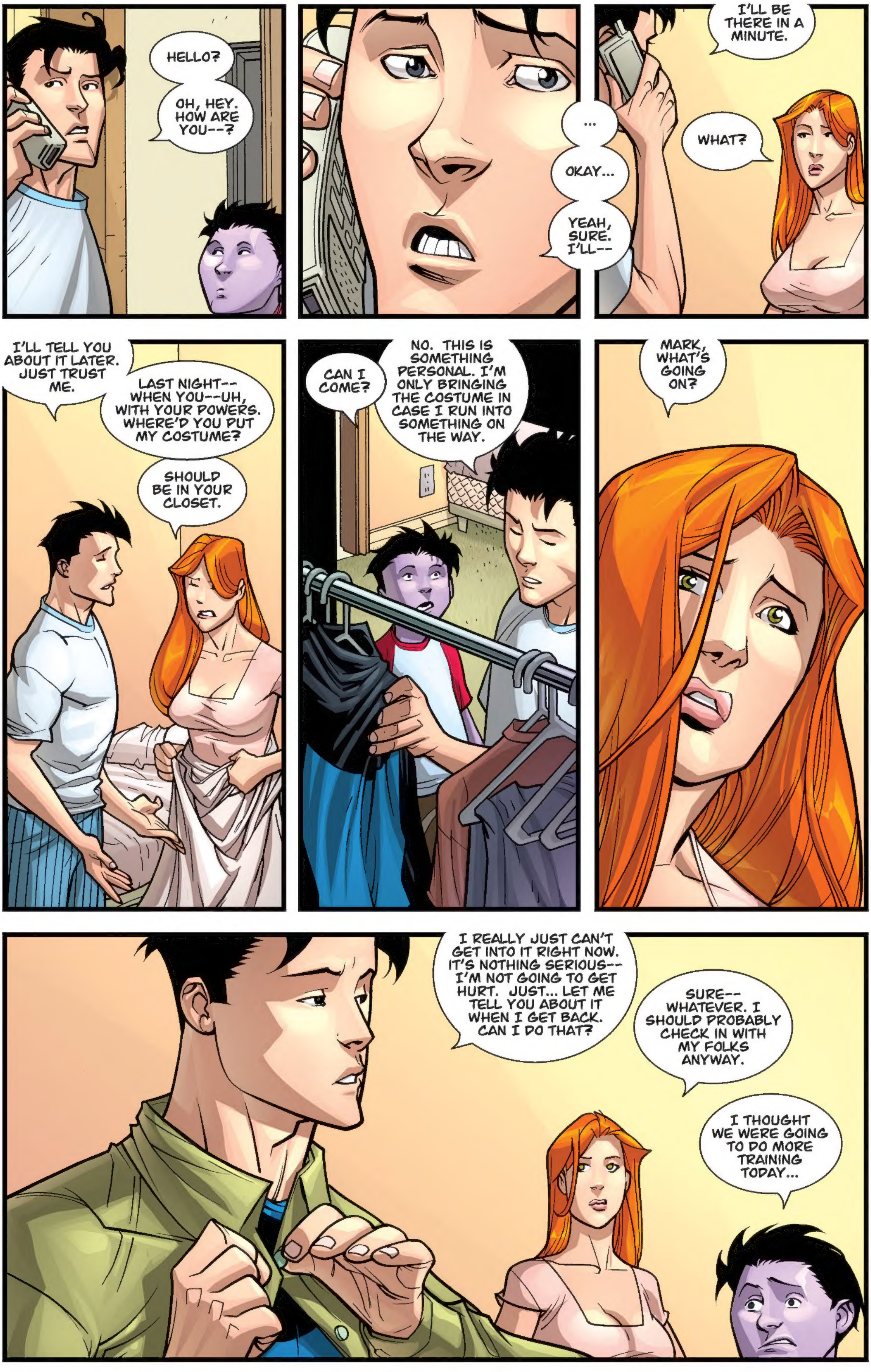
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WHAT--
WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING?


WOKE UP A FEW MINUTES AGO, I WAS JUST... I DON'T KNOW... WATCHING YOU SLEEP...
YOU WERE STARING AT ME LIKE A WEIRDO!
FWAPP!
WEIRDO? YOU RETHINKING THIS WHOLE THING ALREADY?
NO. NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT, MARK GRAYSON. I LOVE YOU.
I LOVE YOU ALMOST AS MUCH AS I WISH WE HAD A PLACE OF OUR OWN.
THIS ISN'T COOL. YOUR MOM'S WHAT--TEN FEET AWAY WHILE WE'RE DOING THIS? SHE HEARD US LAST NIGHT.
SHE DID NOT.
YEAH.
SHE TOTALLY DID, YOU LIAR.
MAYBE, BUT SHE WAS HALF ASLEEP.
I'M WITH YOU. THIS SUCKS, BUT I DON'T WANT TO FLY TO AFRICA EVERY TIME WE WANT TO HAVE SEX, YOU KNOW.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN JUST BUILD A HOUSE WITH YOUR POWERS-- LAND HERE ISN'T CHEAP.
SO... ONE OF US NEEDS TO GET OUR OWN PLACE. WE'RE DECIDED.
I'D LOVE TO. IF ONLY I HAD THE MONEY.

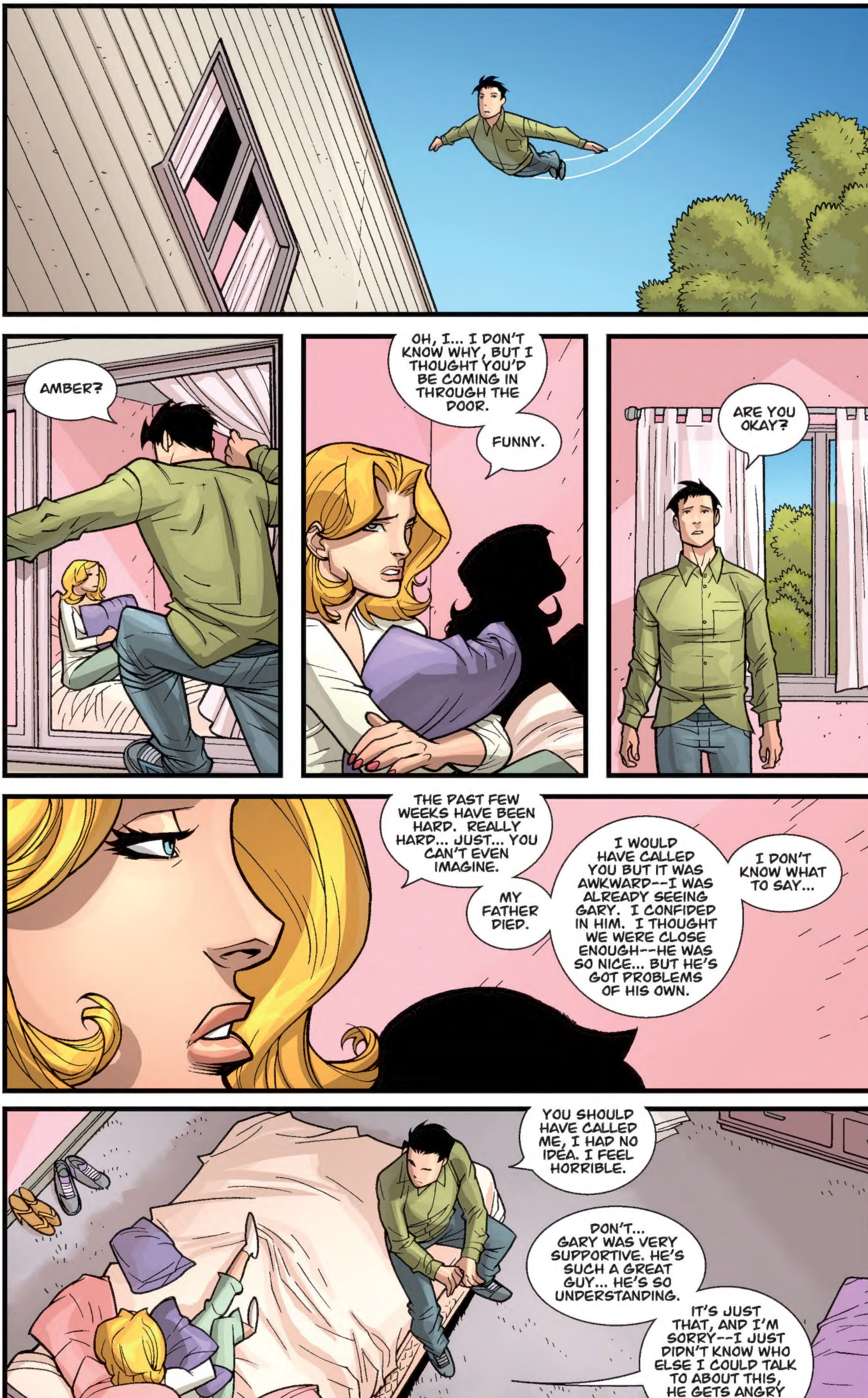


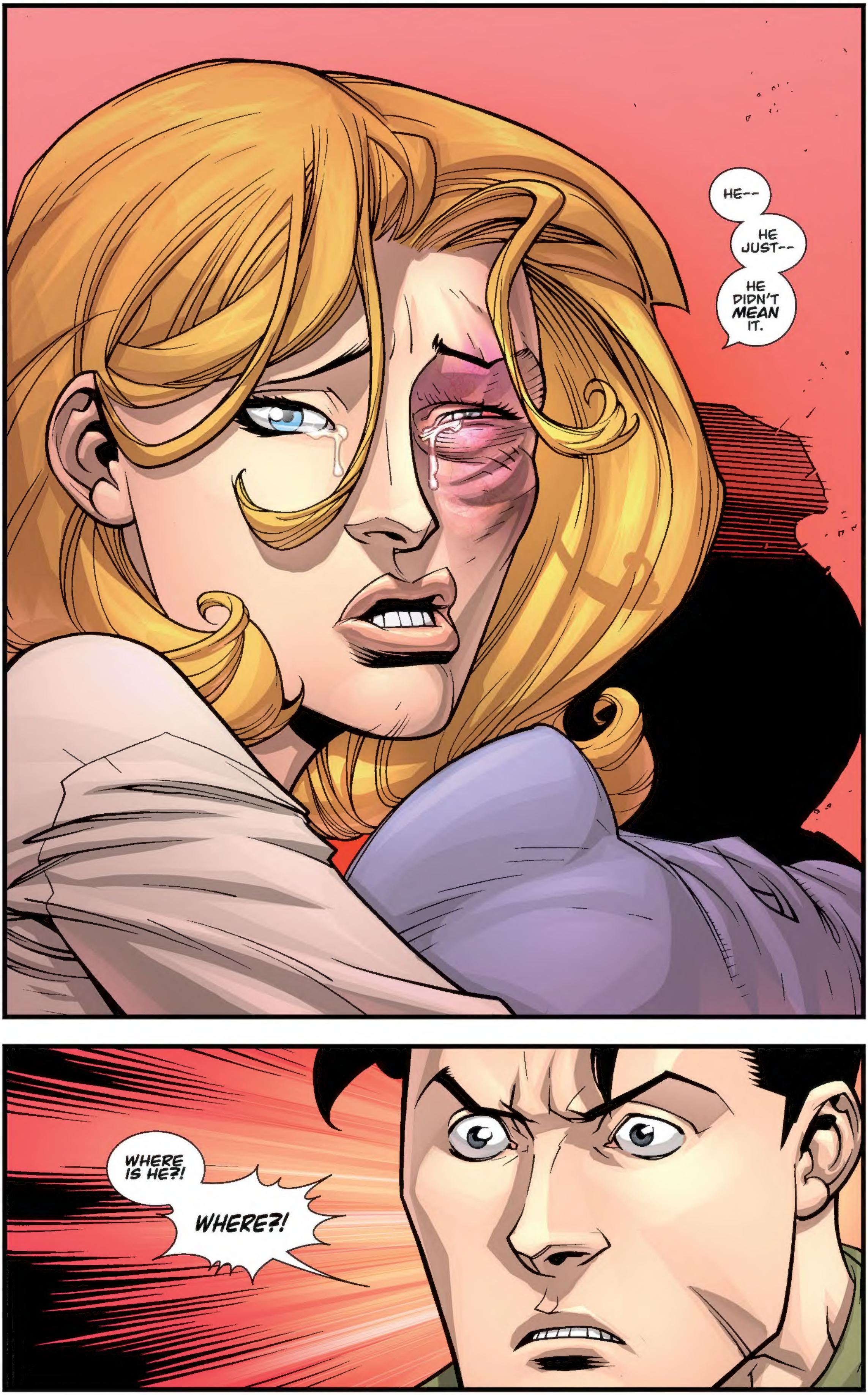
MONEY, HUH? I HAD AN IDEA ABOUT THAT.
RING! RING!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT-- OLIVER WILL GET IT.
NO! IF IT'S FOR YOU HE'LL BRING IT IN HERE AND--
KNOCK! KNOCK!
MARK! PHONE FOR YOU!
CRAP! DON'T LET HIM SEE ME--HE'LL TOTALLY TELL YOUR MOM.
I'M JUST GOING TO GET THE PHONE... I WON'T LET HIM IN.
GIVE IT TO-- HEY!
WHOA-- HEY, EVE!
DON'T TELL MOM, OKAY?
JUST GET OUT!
WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN HERE?

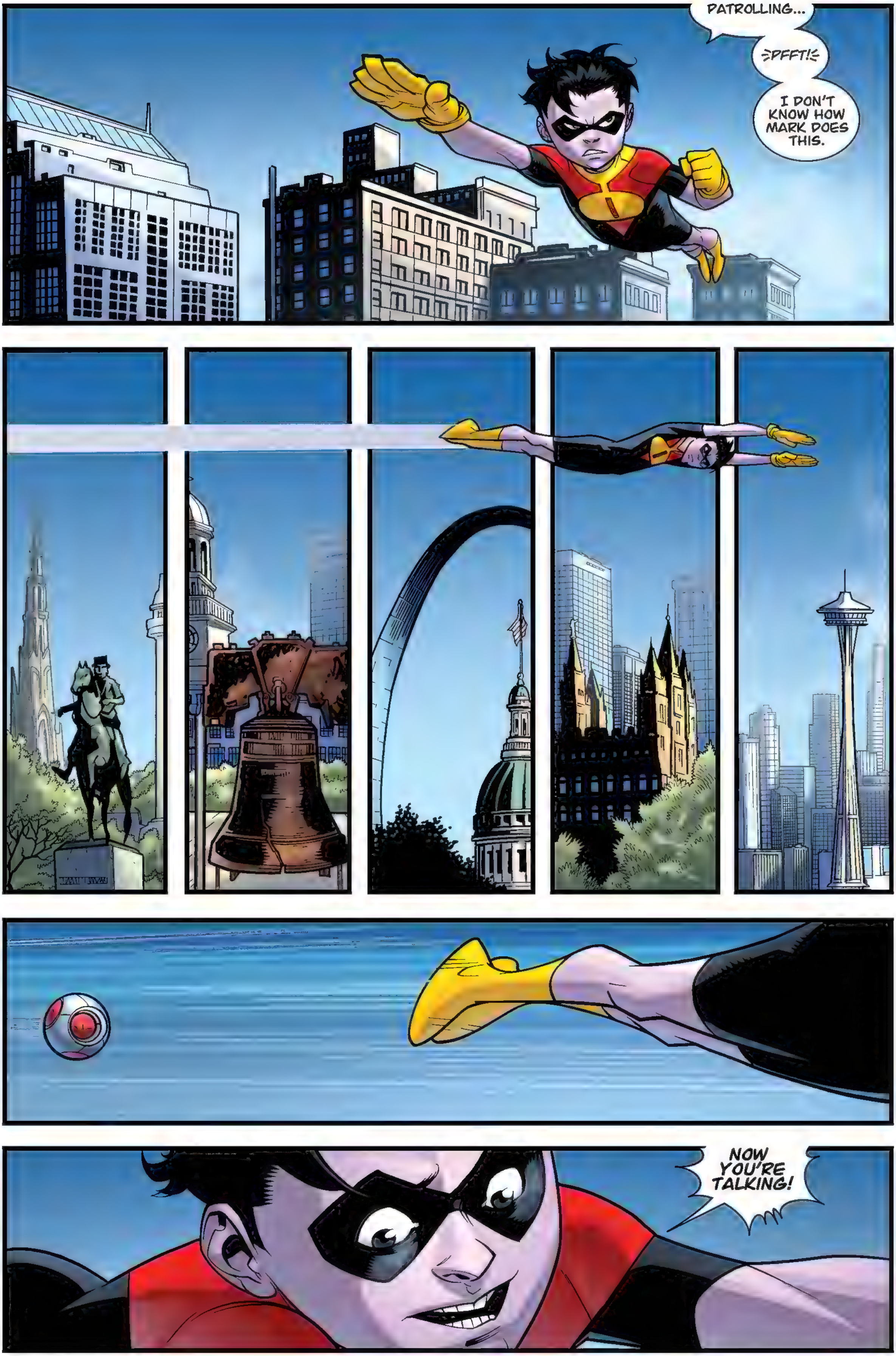

HELLO?
OH, HEY. HOW ARE YOU--?
...
OKAY...
YEAH, SURE. I'LL--
I'LL BE THERE IN A MINUTE.
WHAT?
I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT LATER. JUST TRUST ME.
LAST NIGHT-- WHEN YOU--UH, WITH YOUR POWERS. WHERE'D YOU PUT MY COSTUME?
SHOULD BE IN YOUR CLOSET.
CAN I COME?
NO. THIS IS SOMETHING PERSONAL. I'M ONLY BRINGING THE COSTUME IN CASE I RUN INTO SOMETHING ON THE WAY.
MARK, WHAT'S GOING ON?
I REALLY JUST CAN'T GET INTO IT RIGHT NOW. IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS-- I'M NOT GOING TO GET HURT. JUST... LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT IT WHEN I GET BACK. CAN I DO THAT?
SURE-- WHATEVER. I SHOULD PROBABLY CHECK IN WITH MY FOLKS ANYWAY.
I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO DO MORE TRAINING TODAY...


NO, I'LL TRY TO TAKE YOU OUT TONIGHT. STAY HERE.
EVE, I'LL CALL YOU AS SOON AS I'M DONE.
YOU BETTER.
HEH.
"SLEEPING," MY ASS...


...
STAY HOME?
I THINK NOT.
IT'S TIME FOR--
KID OMNI-MAN'S FIRST SOLO ADVENTURE!!


AMBER?
OH, I... I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT I THOUGHT YOU'D BE COMING IN THROUGH THE DOOR.
FUNNY.
ARE YOU OKAY?
THE PAST FEW WEEKS HAVE BEEN HARD. REALLY HARD... JUST... YOU CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE.
MY FATHER DIED.
I WOULD HAVE CALLED YOU BUT IT WAS AWKWARD--I WAS ALREADY SEEING GARY. I CONFIDED IN HIM. I THOUGHT WE WERE CLOSE ENOUGH--HE WAS SO NICE... BUT HE'S GOT PROBLEMS OF HIS OWN.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...
YOU SHOULD HAVE CALLED ME, I HAD NO IDEA. I FEEL HORRIBLE.
DON'T... GARY WAS VERY SUPPORTIVE. HE'S SUCH A GREAT GUY... HE'S SO UNDERSTANDING.
IT'S JUST THAT, AND I'M SORRY--I JUST DIDN'T KNOW WHO ELSE I COULD TALK TO ABOUT THIS, HE GETS ANGRY SOMETIMES...


HE--
HE JUST--
HE DIDN'T MEAN IT.
WHERE IS HE?!
WHERE?!


PATROLLING...
≷PFFT!≶
I DON'T KNOW HOW MARK DOES THIS.
NOW YOU'RE TALKING!


WRAKKA-DOOM!
KROOM!!
DON'T WASTE MY TIME! I NEED SOMEONE MUCH MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU!
MY MISTAKE.
I WAS HOLDING BACK.
THEN MAYBE YOU ARE STRONG ENOUGH. PLEASE-- LISTEN TO ME. I NEED YOUR HELP, I NEED SOMEONE STRONGER THAN I AM.
I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT!

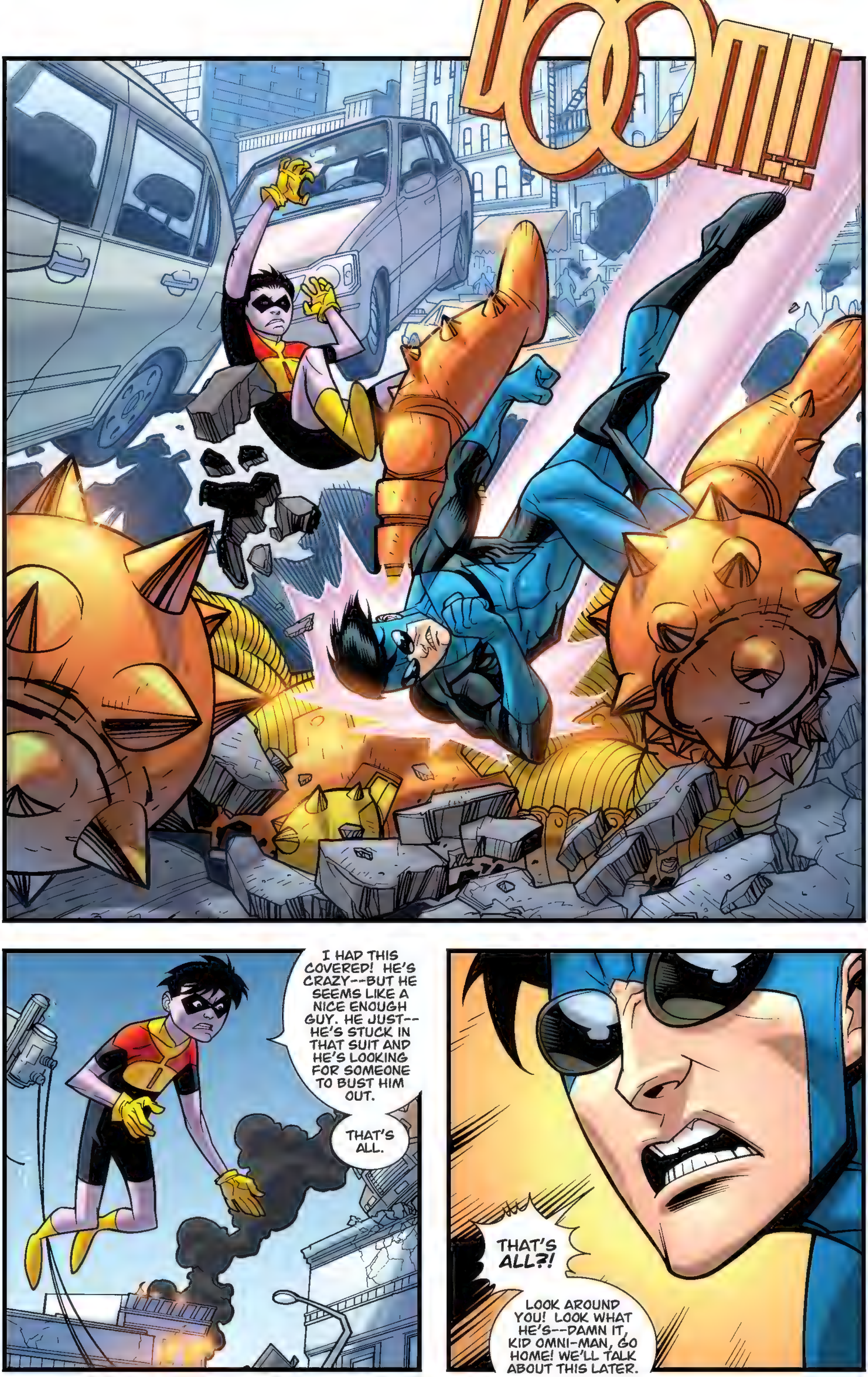

PLEASE?! PLEASE DON'T!!
OH, GOD-- PLEASE!!
YOU DON'T GET TO DO WHAT YOU DID! YOU DON'T EVER HURT HER AGAIN!
EVER!
I MAY BE OUT OF HER LIFE NOW, BUT I STILL CARE ABOUT HER A GREAT DEAL. I WON'T LET YOU DO THIS AGAIN!

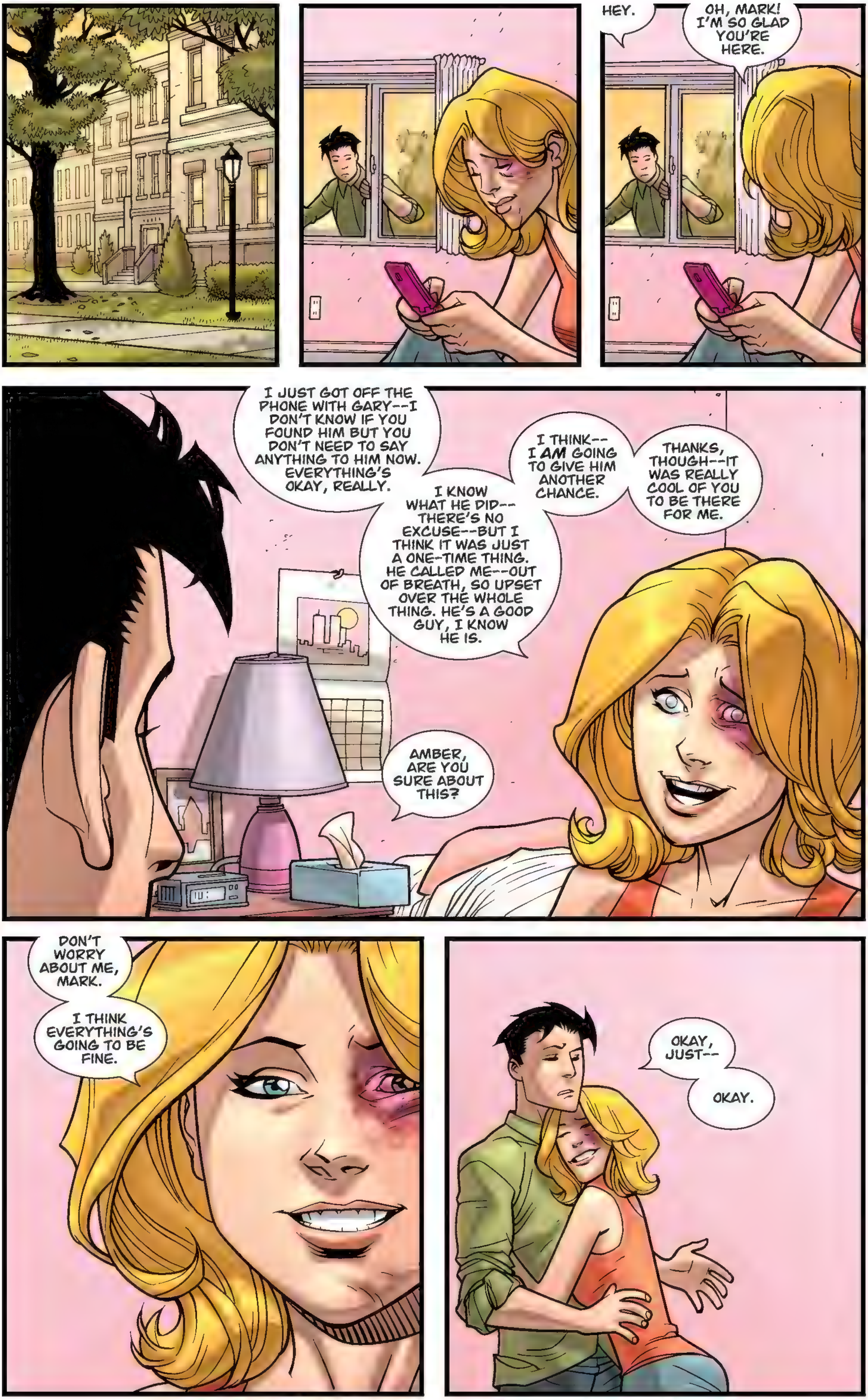

I'M SORRY! I TOLD HER I WAS SORRY! I LOVE HER!
I DIDN'T MEAN TO--I JUST--I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED!
I'M SORRY! PLEASE LET ME GO!


YOU HURT HER AGAIN-- I'LL KNOW ABOUT IT...
...AND I WILL KILL YOU!

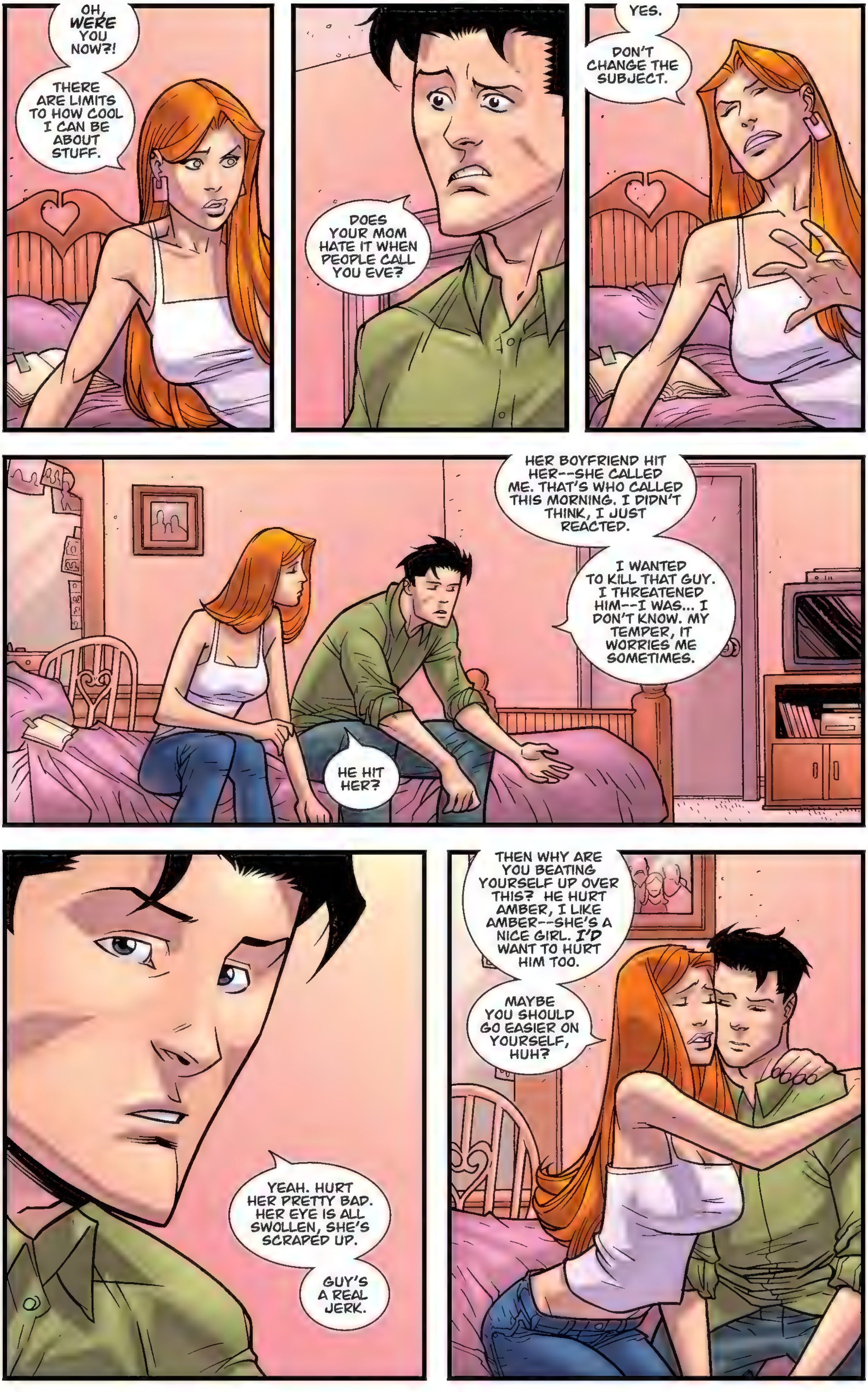

KROOOM!!
THANK YOU! I PROMISE I WON'T EVER--
UH...
YEAH, DUDE-- YOU GOTTA COME PICK ME UP.
I'M--
I DON'T KNOW WHERE I AM...
...OR HOW I GOT HERE. I DIDN'T EVEN SEE WHO...

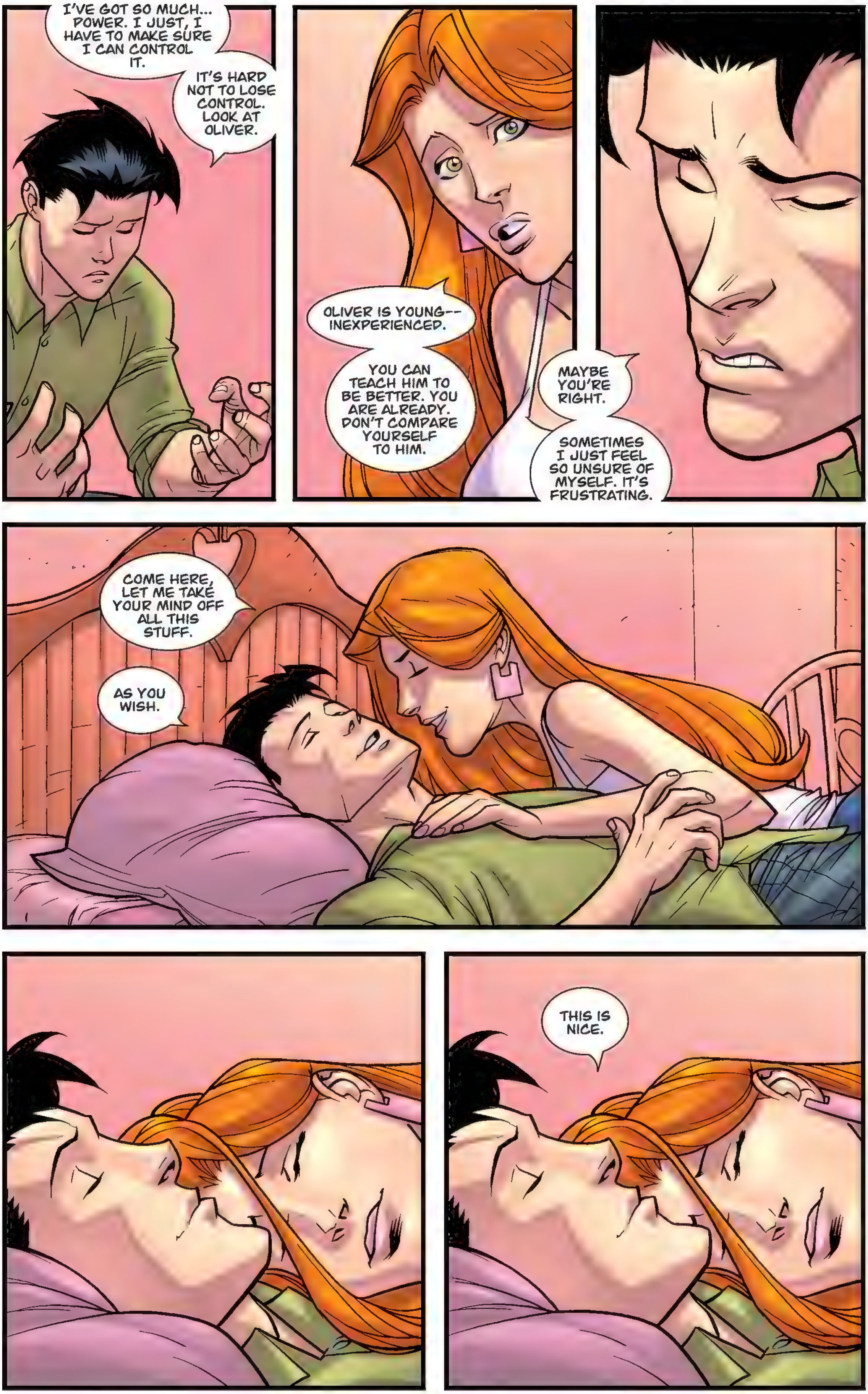

WRAKOOM!
NO! YOU'RE NOT STRONG ENOUGH--YOU'RE JUST WASTING MY TIME!
WHAT THE HELL IS YOUR PROBLEM?!
I TRIED TO HELP--I DID WHAT YOU ASKED! WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?! ARE YOU BIPOLAR OR WHAT?!
MEANWHILE.
HAS EVE BEEN HERE? I NEED TO TALK TO HER.
YOUR BROTHER IS ON TV FIGHTING SOME GIANT ROBOT THING. I THOUGHT YOU WERE TRAINING HIM! HE SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS ALONE.
CRAP.
"WAS EVE HERE?"
CHRIST.

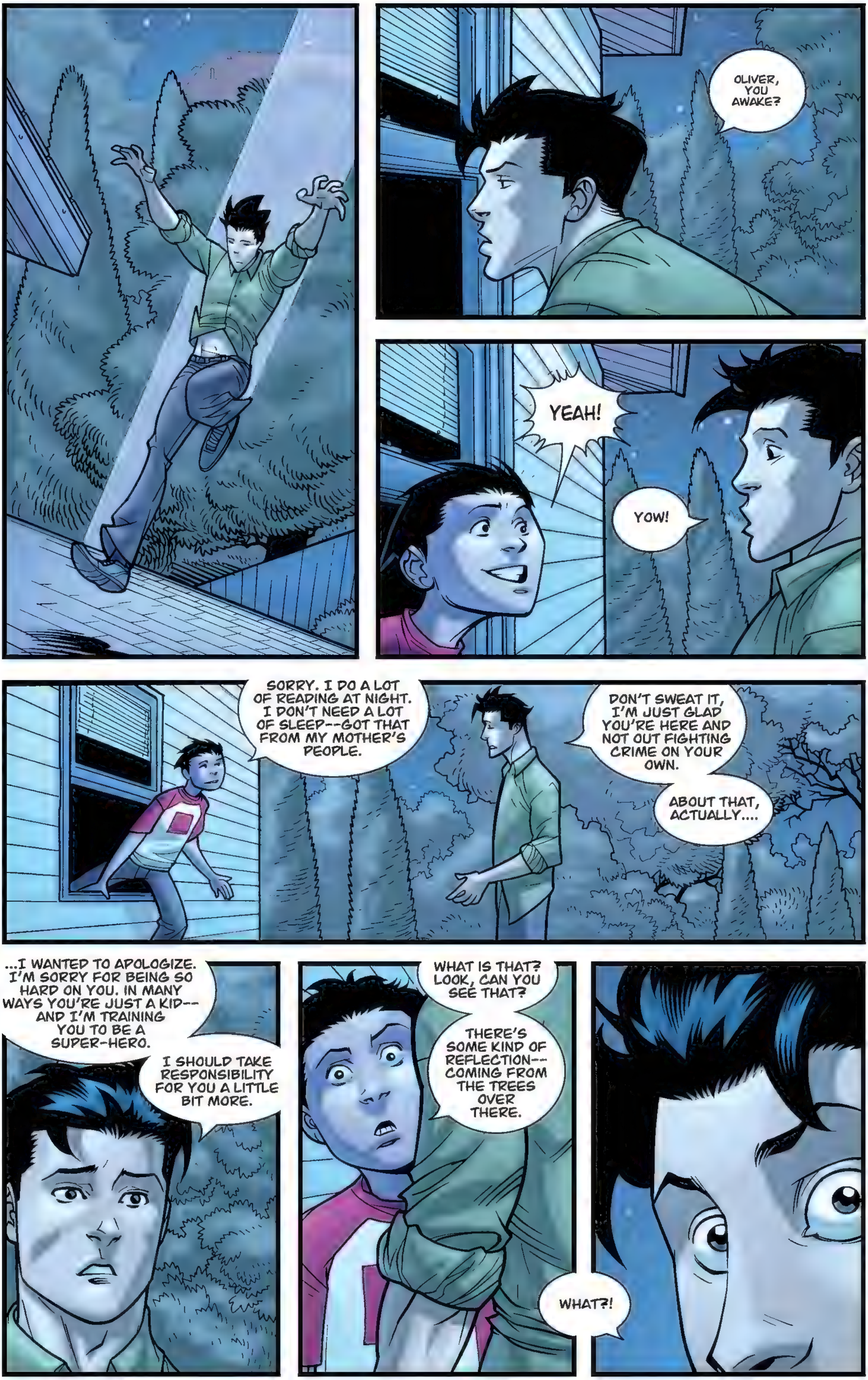

DOOM!!!
I HAD THIS COVERED! HE'S CRAZY--BUT HE SEEMS LIKE A NICE ENOUGH GUY. HE JUST--HE'S STUCK IN THAT SUIT AND HE'S LOOKING FOR SOMEONE TO BUST HIM OUT.
THAT'S ALL.
THAT'S ALL?!
LOOK AROUND YOU! LOOK WHAT HE'S--DAMN IT, KID OMNI-MAN, GO HOME! WE'LL TALK ABOUT THIS LATER.


HEY.
OH, MARK! I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE.
I JUST GOT OFF THE PHONE WITH GARY--I DON'T KNOW IF YOU FOUND HIM BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO SAY ANYTHING TO HIM NOW. EVERYTHING'S OKAY, REALLY.
I KNOW WHAT HE DID--THERE'S NO EXCUSE--BUT I THINK IT WAS JUST A ONE-TIME THING. HE CALLED ME--OUT OF BREATH, SO UPSET OVER THE WHOLE THING. HE'S A GOOD GUY, I KNOW HE IS.
I THINK--I AM GOING TO GIVE HIM ANOTHER CHANCE.
THANKS, THOUGH--IT WAS REALLY COOL OF YOU TO BE THERE FOR ME.
AMBER, ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, MARK.
I THINK EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE FINE.
OKAY, JUST--
OKAY.


EVE'S HOUSE.
FWOPP!
KNOCK KNOCK
IS EVE HOME?
HER FIRST NAME IS SAMANTHA. EVE IS HER MIDDLE NAME.
IS SAMANTHA HERE?
IN HER BEDROOM.
WHERE THE HECK WERE YOU ALL DAY?
I WAS--
I WAS WITH AMBER.


OH, WERE YOU NOW?!
THERE ARE LIMITS TO HOW COOL I CAN BE ABOUT STUFF.
DOES YOUR MOM HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE CALL YOU EVE?
YES.
DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT.
HER BOYFRIEND HIT HER--SHE CALLED ME. THAT'S WHO CALLED THIS MORNING. I DIDN'T THINK, I JUST REACTED.
I WANTED TO KILL THAT GUY. I THREATENED HIM--I WAS... I DON'T KNOW. MY TEMPER, IT WORRIES ME SOMETIMES.
HE HIT HER?
YEAH. HURT HER PRETTY BAD. HER EYE IS ALL SWOLLEN, SHE'S SCRAPED UP.
GUY'S A REAL JERK.
THEN WHY ARE YOU BEATING YOURSELF UP OVER THIS? HE HURT AMBER, I LIKE AMBER--SHE'S A NICE GIRL. I'D WANT TO HURT HIM TOO.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO EASIER ON YOURSELF, HUH?


I'VE GOT SO MUCH... POWER. I JUST, I HAVE TO MAKE SURE I CAN CONTROL IT.
IT'S HARD NOT TO LOSE CONTROL. LOOK AT OLIVER.
OLIVER IS YOUNG-- INEXPERIENCED.
YOU CAN TEACH HIM TO BE BETTER. YOU ARE ALREADY. DON'T COMPARE YOURSELF TO HIM.
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.
SOMETIMES I JUST FEEL SO UNSURE OF MYSELF. IT'S FRUSTRATING.
COME HERE, LET ME TAKE YOUR MIND OFF ALL THIS STUFF.
AS YOU WISH.
THIS IS NICE.


OLIVER, YOU AWAKE?
YEAH!
YOW!
SORRY. I DO A LOT OF READING AT NIGHT. I DON'T NEED A LOT OF SLEEP--GOT THAT FROM MY MOTHER'S PEOPLE.
DON'T SWEAT IT, I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE HERE AND NOT OUT FIGHTING CRIME ON YOUR OWN.
ABOUT THAT, ACTUALLY....
...I WANTED TO APOLOGIZE. I'M SORRY FOR BEING SO HARD ON YOU. IN MANY WAYS YOU'RE JUST A KID--AND I'M TRAINING YOU TO BE A SUPER-HERO.
I SHOULD TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOU A LITTLE BIT MORE.
WHAT IS THAT? LOOK, CAN YOU SEE THAT?
THERE'S SOME KIND OF REFLECTION--COMING FROM THE TREES OVER THERE.
WHAT?!


GOT IT!
KRKOOM!!!
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!
SOMEONE WAS WATCHING US.

WRITE US @

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PENVINCIPALS

Issue 56, already... I can't believe we're already half-way to issue 60. Man... time flies.

Speaking of time--I'm pressed for it--trying to gear up for "On-Time in '09!" which was just announced. We're going to have guaranteed ship-dates throughout the year and that means 12 issues of all my series for the year 2009... exciting stuff--but stressful.

So onto the letters!

Kirkley Rathcencia,

Dude. 52. NICE! Beautiful issue. They keep getting better. And you know how change can be...BUT FCO has been ridiculous. Never thought filling Bill Crabtree's shoes would look so easy. I particularly liked the colors on the page with the missile explosion. Keep him around. BTW, I was thinking of changing my name. How did FCO get his name or what does it stand for?

If I told you that he'd have to kill you... and me.

But, to my main point: I don't recall ever reading a comic where they actually talk about one of the oldest comic book devices, namely letting the villains live. John Roy mentioned "meta-commentary" in #51's letters and I assume he was talking about this. But, yeah, why does this happen? The obvious reasons are there: sell more comics, keep interesting characters/villains around to build up a history, upholding a moral code, the good characters don't "kill", etc., etc. But like Oliver says, "How many times have you fought those guys now?" I LOVE me some Mauler Twins but DANG they keep causing 'Vince some trouble. Maybe Oliver and Nolan have a point... This could be a slippery slope for Mark. I look forward to seeing where this goes.

Me too!

On a side note, are there any plans for an expansion set for INVINCIBLE Hero-Clix? How about RexSplode, The Immortal, Dupli-Kate, The Mauler Twins, Battle Beast, and Oliver? Maybe even a female Viltrumite, a Flaxian, Shapesmith, or Shrinking Ray? Maybe a Debbie or Cecil token? Do it, dude!

I'd be all for it, but I hear Topps just shot down WizKids, the makers of hero-clix--so who knows. I'm ready when they are.

I recently moved to Tennessee but really miss my old shop, Comicazi back in Somerville, MA. Could you tell Mike and the gang hello for me? Thanks. Heh.

Hello!

I.I.I. (Image Is It),
Dan "Kentucky" Benningfield

P.S.: Congrats on being elevated to a member of the Pentavirate or whatever over there at Image. Try not to rule the world with such a heavy hand (READ: hook a brother up when you take control of everything).

I'll try to use my powers for good.

YE GODS!

So Battle Beast is coming back? Brilliant! I hope it's not "back" in the sense of "briefly returning only to be turned into a pile of burst intestines by Oliver" because that cat's too good to die.

I suspect you liked issue 55.

Speaking of Oliver, he's gone a bit dark. Because it's superhero comics, it was inevitable that he and Mark would come to blows, but I didn't expect it this early, and I didn't expect Oliver to come across as so...alien. I mean, obviously he is literally an alien, so it makes sense, but you guys did a great job of portraying his cold detachment from human concerns. Brr.

Thanks.

Regarding the Silver Age comments, from my perspective at least, it's not supposed to be a criticism, or a suggestion that INVINCIBLE is archaic in any way. It's more to do with your approach to plotting, which is of that constantly-bubbling-pot-of-subplots style, something that has gone out of favor in the past ten or so years. Up until some point in the late 80s or early 90s, writers would be weaving in all sorts of little plots and subplots, but now that everything seems to be geared to six-issue chunks ready for the trade collection, and writers don't stick around for more than a year or so, that kind of storytelling is much more rare. So that's why INVINCIBLE reminds me of when I was reading the Frenz/DeFalco Amazing Spider-Man, or Stern's Avengers. Perhaps it would be different if it weren't creator-owned and McLarsentino changed the creative

team every six issues, but I'm glad it's not. INVINCIBLE is modern, as John Roy says, but there is a classic element to the storytelling too, and I like the mixture of both, so keep it up.

I do take it as a compliment... but "retro" isn't very popular these days--so I don't want Invincible to get labeled as a retro comic.

Anyway, that's it. I'm really enjoying Oliver's story, although I am wondering what's going on with Allen and Nolan. Oh, and I hear Bendis is leaving Mighty Avengers. Could it be that a Kirkman Avengers title might actually happen? Please?

Kelvin Green

I have no interest currently in writing anything for Marvel. Image just made me a partner--and so I'm staking my claim on this side of the fence. Delightful Dan Slott will be taking over Mighty Avengers and I couldn't be more thrilled. I'm really looking forward to seeing what he does with the title. Brian was kind of sucking on that title anyway. ;-)

Hi Robert,
Loved the story and how things are developing with Eve and with Kid Omniman. It is bringing back feelings of when Miracleman had to deal with Kid Miracleman in that great book. Not to imply that you are ripping off that story at all, in fact I mean it as a compliment, because no books I've read recently bring that kind of excitement. That last panel in the issue speaks volumes, the way that Kid Omniman looked while being hugged by his brother was chilling! Great artwork! When a great story is coupled with the perfect artist the result is INVINCIBLE!
(Please disregard that last sentence--accept the intent, but upon further reading it sounds like King Fanboy wrote it!)
Marc

Thanks for the letter, King Fanboy.

Dear Pen-vincipals,

So, I've been a huge fan of INVINCIBLE since I heard about it on the Fistful of Comics & Games webcast and picked up the first trade. I didn't expect much, frankly, but it was everything they'd said and more. I honestly think you are saving the superhero genre, one issue at a time. It's just that damn good. Every trade is a thrilling rollercoaster ride.

No pressure...

I've got all the trades, and all the singles, and I'm starting to branch out into WOLF-MAN and BRIT. My trades are constantly circulating among my circle of friends, some of whom don't even read comics. But they can't wait to get their hands on the next INVINCIBLE TPB, even if they'd never admit it to their coworkers.
Ashamed of comics? FOR SHAME!

Having enjoyed your work so much so far, I know that you guys are all brilliant, amazing writers and artists; masters of taking the standard tropes and clichés of comicbookdom and turning them on their ears. So I know that I don't have to beg something as ridiculous as "please, please, please don't make Oliver a villain, cuz that's so done and boring and expected", because I know you guys are better than that and even though you will make him conflicted and portray him with all the complexity and honesty you've shown all your characters, you won't stoop to rehashing one of the tiredest plots in the history of the medium. Because you guys are just too awesome for that. I know you'll continue to surprise me and keep me guessing and the reveals will be just as amazing and mindbending and "holy shit, did that just happen??" like all the ones that have come so far.

We can take a hint...

See? I don't even need to bring it up, I'm that confident in your mastery of the form. I have too much respect for you to ever doubt you that way.

Seriously... I get it.

You guys keep writin' (and drawin' and colorin' and letterin') 'em, and I'll keep buyin' 'em.

N.

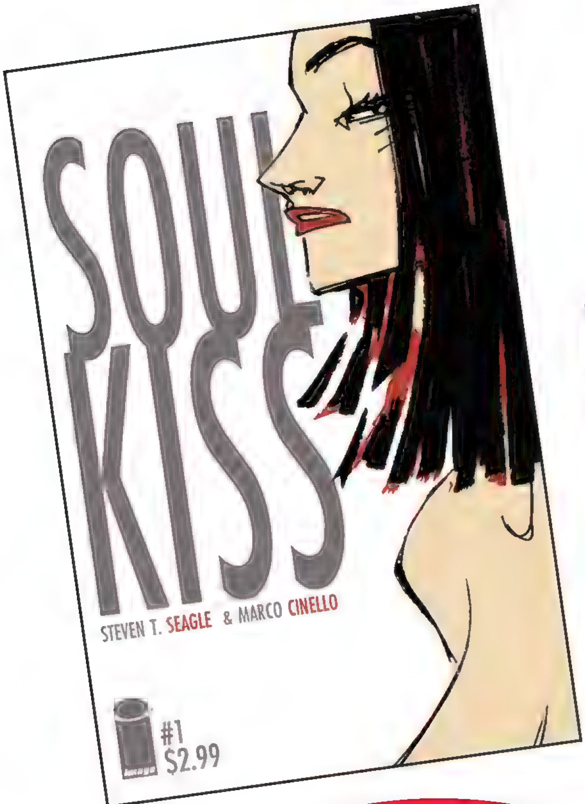
Thanks, sir. Very awesome of you to write.

That'll do it for letters. This month's pin-up is by Eamon O'Donoghue. Eamon did a bang-up job drawing Atom Eve, I'm sure you'll all agree. Thanks so much for sending the pin-up Eamon, I'm sorry it took so long to run it.

See you guys back here in a few weeks (for real this time)!

-Robert Kirkman




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codeflesh
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A story of love, damnation and lipstick by Steven T. Seagle and Marco Cinello.

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